

Message from the Chief January 6, 2011

Good afternoon,

Yesterday our Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Unit participated in a regional public safety response to an armed robbery/barricade situation with shots fired at Chandler Fashion Mall. The mall and surrounding businesses were evacuated.

Officers negotiated with the suspect and after several hours took him into custody without incident, and without injury to community members, hostages or officers.

Earlier this week, our SWAT Unit responded into Mesa to apprehend the suspect in an armed robbery that had occurred in Tempe. That situation also was resolved without injury to community members or law enforcement.

Yesterday's incident received major media attention not only from the local affiliates, but nationally, including coverage by CNN. The Tempe SWAT team's photo was run on the front page at the top of the fold in today's Arizona Republic, and is attached. US Marshall, David Gonzales wrote the following:

Tom,

Just a note to thank you for your immediate call for assistance when officers from the U.S. Marshals Violent Offender Task Force were involved in an exchange of gunfire with a suspect and the subsequent taking of hostages.

Your officers, including your tactical team, immediately responded to the scene. I have always have been a fan of Tempe PD because of your professionalism and "get the job done" attitude. I became an even bigger fan yesterday.

Your officers did an outstanding job in all aspects of this very confusing and fluid critical incident. Tempe's actions at this high profile tactical operation demonstrated to the citizens of Arizona what a well trained, well led police force can accomplished.

Please express my thanks to your troops and as always, the U.S. Marshals Service is always available to assist you in any way.

David

While SWAT prefers to do the job quietly, professionally and preferably out of the limelight, it is appropriate that the community feels secure in knowing that our SWAT team is among the best, highly trained and ready 24/7 to contain, de-escalate, mediate and resolve these volatile, dynamic and dangerous situations in which the public is at risk.

An excellent job by all involved, and highest commendation go to all our SWAT Officers and supervisors. Special appreciation to Lt. Noah Johnson for his leadership, decision-making capability, teamwork, operational and tactical skills demonstrated by the team in resolving these situations successfully and keeping our community safe.

Sincerely,

Tom